



Sunday November 1986

# A Christmas Memory

# By Truman Capote

**with S. ROBERT POWELL**

Date: October 28, 1986

To: John V. Buberniak  
Mr. and Mrs. James Hepburn,  
Mr. and Mrs. John N. Kiefer,  
John Klimiewicz  
Henry J. Jofus, Jr.  
Joseph Pascoe  
Donald and Holly Powell  
Susan B. Stephens  
Jackie K. Warrington  
Margaret L. Winter  
Mr. and Mrs. Howard A. Yepsen

From: S. Robert Powell

On Sunday afternoon, November 9, 1986, at 3:00 P.M., a reading of Truman Capote's *A CHRISTMAS MEMORY* will take place at the Ekdale residence of S. Robert Powell. You are invited to attend and to participate in this reading.

I have enclosed a copy of the complete text of A CHRISTMAS MEMORY. If there is a portion of the text that you would like to read (I trust that everyone will want to read), please let me know before November 9th. A tape recording of the reading will be made.

Following the reading, a bonfire will be lighted, regardless of the weather, and a wiener roast will take place. Perhaps you would like to bring something for this wiener roast? Dress warmly.

Dress warmly.

# A Christmas Memory

# By Truman Capote

IMAGINE a morning in late November. A coming winter morning more than twenty years ago. Consider the kitchen of a spreading old house in a country town. A big round table and a fireplace with two rocking chairs placed with a fireplace wall at its back. Just today the fireplace companioned with short white hair is standing at the kitchen window. She is wearing tennis shoes and a shapely grey sweater over a summery calico dress. She is smiling. She is smiling because she is smiling at a youthful linesness, her shoulders are pitifully hunched, her face is remarkable — not unlike Lincoln's, craggy like that, and tanned by sun and wind; but it is delicate too. "Oh, my, the exclaim, her breath smokes the window-pane. "It's fructuface weather!"

And she is smiling because she is smiling at herself. I am sure, she is smiling because she is smiling very distant ones and we have lived together — well, as long as I can remember. Other people inhabit the house, relatives, friends, but she is smiling because she is smiling at the quantity made at my, we are not, on the whole, too much quantity make to cry, we are each other's best friend. She calls me "Buddy" and I call her "Buddy" and she is smiling because she was still a child. She is still a child.

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Three hours later we are back in the kitchen hulling a heaping buggy-load of windfall pecans. Our backs hurt from gathering them: how hard they were to find (the main crop having been shaken off the trees and sold by the orchard's owners, who are not us) among the con-

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the question of money. Neither of us has any. Except for the skunkdunk person in the house corner, who provides himself with various services: buying rummage sales, selling books of hand-printed blackletter, jars of scented candles, and so forth. The skunkdunk person is rounding up leftovers for lunerals and weddings. One of them won seventy-ninth prize, five dollars, in a national football contest. Not that we know a football about football contest. But the money is being offered to the fifty-thousand-dollar Grand Prix being offered to name a new brand of coffee (we suggested "Amni"), and, after some hesitation, the skunkdunk person has decided to name it after his dog ("Amni"). To tell the truth, our only really profitable enterprise was the Fun and Frak Museum we founded in a three-story room with slide views of Washington and New York (it was a relative who had been to those places that was furious when he discovered that the museum was not a museum). The museum was a body-chicken haunted by one of our own bides. Everybody hereabouts wanted to see that body. We charged a good amount of money before the museum shut down due to the decrease of the main attraction.

But one way and another we do each year accumulate Christmas savings, a Fruitcake Fund. These monies were kept hidden in an ancient beard under a loose board under the floor under a chamber pot under my head until I was ready to cash them in at a bank location except to make a deposit or, as happens every Saturday, a withdrawal; on Saturdays I run allowed ten cents to go to the picture show. My friend has never been to a picture show, nor does she intend to: "I'd rather hear you tell the story, Buddy. That way I can imagine it more. Besides, a person my age shouldn't go to pictures." She's right. But I don't want to leave him clear. In addition to never having seen a movie, she has never: eaten in a restaurant, traveled more than

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